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E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: OPPOSING IRAN PRESIDENCY AT UNDP

REF: STATE 1500

(SBU) We delivered reftel demarche January 9 to MFA Deputy Director for International Organizations Vadim Smirnov. Smirnov said that although he did not usually handle UNDP issues, Russian practice was to support the regional group's choice for positions on UN Boards and committees. He did not know if Moscow had instructed its UN Mission on the issue, but said the Mission "knew how to proceed in such situations." He took note of U.S. arguments against Iran's Presidency of the UNDP Board and said he would check with the Mission, but indicated that Moscow could not agree with the U.S.'s approach.

BEYRLE